

Smoke House

Above Jobstown, Burlington County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-263

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NJ

3. JOBSTOWN

3A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

HABS
NJ
3-JOBSTOWN
3A-A D D E N D U M

John Black's Smoke House
Monmouth Road, East of Jobstown
Springfield Township
Burlington County, New Jersey

Owner of Farm: John V. Bishop

Date of Erection: 1786 per inscribed stone

Architect: Unknown

Builder: John Black (ca. 1752-1815)

Present Condition: Original, still usable

Number of Stories: One

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone masonry (Jersey ironstone)

Exterior walls - same (coursed ashlar front
and side)

Interior walls - none

Chimney - none

Roof - gable

Historical Data:

The identity of the owner of the farm for whom was erected this smoke house, as indicated by the name "J. Black" and date "1786" inscribed in the front gable, as also of previous and successive owners, is discovered by search of title in the public records, and is reported as follows:

By deed of 10 May 1699, Benjamin Jones and wife Sarah, of Burlington County, conveyed to William Black Jr., of Chesterfield Township in same County, a tract of 200 acres "at a place called Oneanikon" in

Springfield Township. William Black, of Chesterfield, describing himself as eldest son and heir of John Black deceased and as grandson of the abovenamed grantee William Black, conveyed the same tract to Thomas Black of Springfield for 20 shillings by deed of 29 October 1744, reciting the deed abovementioned.

Thomas Black of Springfield Township was evidently residing on that tract there when he came into actual possession of it in 1744 as said, and on 11 September 1751, the date of his will (proved 12 October next) in which he devised the profits of the plantation to his wife Mary Black during widowhood, and the possession to an expected child if living to the age of 21, otherwise to testator's brothers William and Samuel Black equally.

John Black, the posthumous son and sole heir of Thomas Black abovesaid, came into possession of the farm upon attaining his majority about 1773. Obviously he was the "J. Black 1786" of the datestone inscription on the smoke house. In a quitclaim deed of division dated 12 September 1815, Thomas Black^(a) and others to John Black (Jr.), all of Springfield, it is recited that:

"Whereas John Black, late of the township of Springfield, did in his lifetime become seized of various large tracts of land and real estate situated in the County of Burlington, and whereas John Black died intestate, whereupon the said tracts descended unto his children, Thomas Black, John Black and Mary Black, who now hold the same undivided, as tenants in common, and whereas the parties above have agreed to make partition of the said tracts." By this deed, two of the heirs quitclaimed to the third "All that messuage, plantation and tract of land, it being part of the Homestead Farm of the said John Black deceased which lies on the northwardly side of the road leading from Mt. Holly to Monmouth Court House" in Springfield Township, describing the boundaries of a 309 acre farm having a

(a) This son Thomas Black received the part of the farm on the southern side of Monmouth Road, on which tract is a farmhouse dated 1809 and a smoke house bearing a stone inscribed T.B. 1825 in its brick wall, which latter building we have surveyed as NJ-636.

frontage of some 4800 feet on the north side of Monmouth Road. The entrance lane to this farm is found a mile east of the village of Jobstown, as appears on the location map shown on the cover sheet of our survey drawings of the smoke house here considered.

The second son John Black Jr. to whom was partitioned the part of the ancestral farm in 1815 as above, was residing there in Springfield Township on 2 October 1867, the date of his will (proved 6 July 1875) in which he devised "to my son Alfred L. Black my homestead farm, now occupied by him, in the township of Springfield."

By deed of 28 August 1901, Florence Black of Springfield Township, describing herself as the daughter of one of the heirs of Alfred L. Black and as such became seized of an undivided one-third of his real estate, conveyed to Henry M. Black of the same place her interest in that "certain homestead farm lately occupied by Alfred L. Black now deceased, the same being the homestead devised to him by his father, John Black".

Henry M. Black abovesaid and others lost the farm in foreclosure proceedings against him, and it was taken by the sheriff and sold to Berte W. Orvis of Mt. Holly by deed of 2 March 1939. By deed of 4 May next, the said Mrs. Orvis, widow, conveyed to John V. Bishop of Mansfield Township a part of the same premises, describing a tract having some 1620 feet frontage on the north side of Monmouth Road and 3216 on the east side of Meeting House road. Mr. Bishop was still owner of the farm at the time of our survey of the smoke house thereon, March-April 1940.

Architectural Analysis:

This example of smoke house (formerly a feature of every farm) is typical in design. Used

for curing meats for winter use before the advent of the modern commercial cold storage business, a fire of smoldering hickory wood was built in the brick fire-box in the corner of the chamber and the meats hung from the horizontal carriers above it.

Reference:

Search of title in the Land and Probate records of the Province of New Jersey (deposited in the office of the Secretary of State) and of the County of Burlington, by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. research editor, report received 14 May 1940

THE STONES ARE CUT APPROXIMATELY 9 INCHES IN HEIGHT
THERE ARE 1" ROUNDES TO THE CORNER OF THE CORNER AND 9 INCHES
TO THE PEAK.

Lewis D. Cook
Supervising Historian

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